

# DER TAG

McMASTER UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

PR 4074 .T

Der Tag

C.2



3 9005 0454 6298 7

PR  
4074

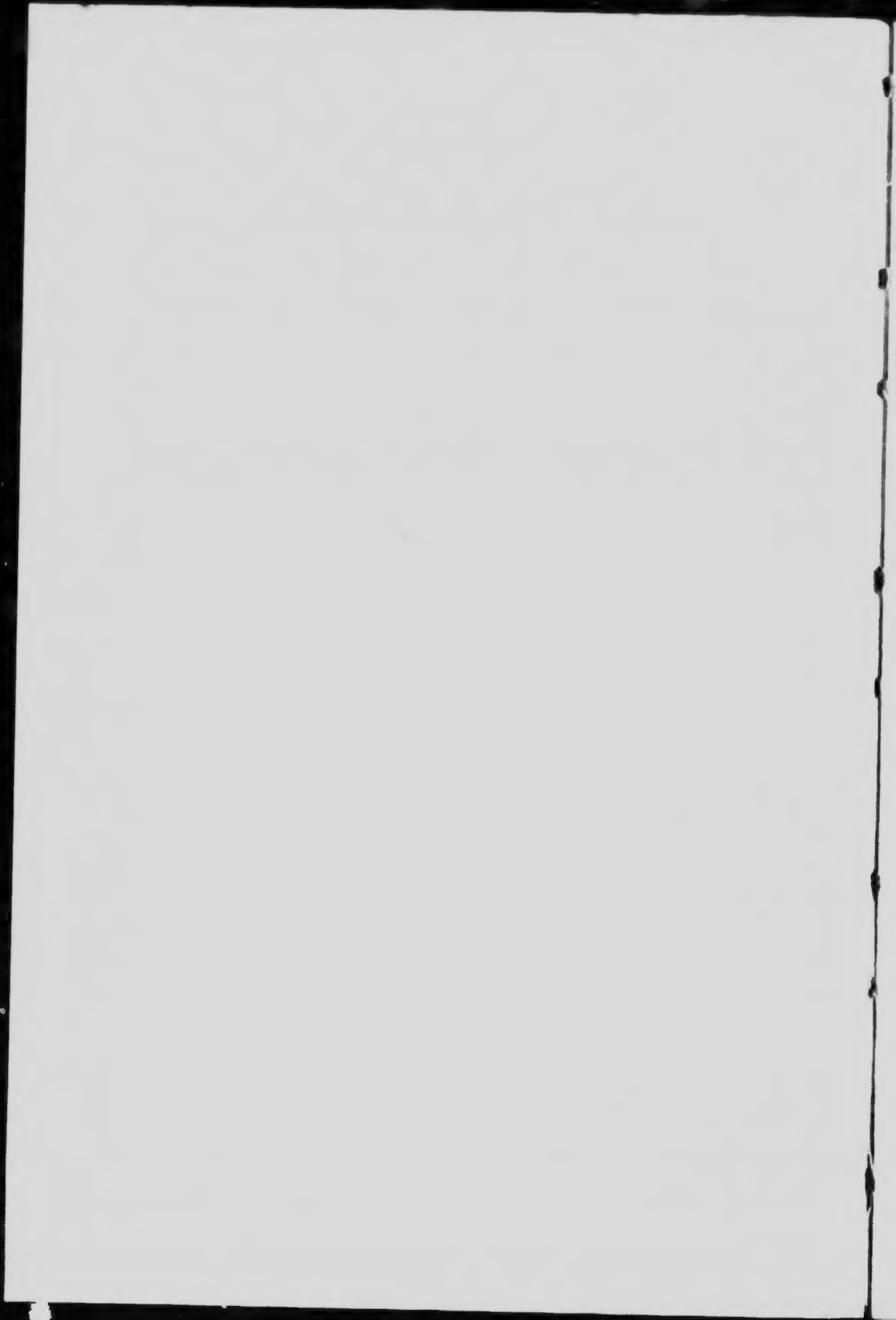
.T

## J. M. BARRIE

First Edition  
m5055



DER TAG



# DER TAG

A Play

BY

J. M. BARRIE

HODDER AND STOUGHTON

LONDON NEW YORK TORONTO

Copyright in the  
United States of America by  
J. M. Barrie

*[All rights reserved]*

## DER TAG

---

*A bare chamber, lighted by a penny dip which casts shadows. On a hard chair by the table sits an Emperor in thought. To him come his Chancellor and an Officer.*

CHANCELLOR

Your Imperial Majesty——

OFFICER

Sire——

*(The Emperor rises.)*

EMPEROR

Is that the paper? *(Indicating paper in Chancellor's hand.)*



## DER TAG

---

CHANCELLOR

*(Giving it to him)* It only awaits your Imperial Majesty's signature.

OFFICER

When you have signed that paper, sire, the Fatherland will be at war with France and Russia.

EMPEROR

At last ! This little paper——

CHANCELLOR

Not of the value of a bird's feather until it has your royal signature. Then—— !

## DER TAG

---

EMPEROR

Then it will sing round the planet, the vibration of it will not pass in a hundred years. How still the world has grown since I raised this pen. All Europe's listening. Europe! That's Germany when I have signed. And yet——

OFFICER

Your Imperial Majesty is not afraid to sign ?

EMPEROR

*(Flashing)* Afraid !

OFFICER

*(Abject)* Oh, sire !

## DER TAG

---

### EMPEROR

I am irresistible to-day. "Red blood boils in my veins, to me every open door is the gift of a world, I hear a thousand nightingales, I could eat all the elephants of Hindustan and pick my teeth with the spire of Strasburg cathedral."

### OFFICER

That is the Fatherland to-day. Such as we are, that you have made us, each seeking to copy you, in so far as man can repeat his deity. It was you who fashioned us into a sword, sire, and now the sword must speak.

## DER TAG

---

EMPEROR

*(Approvingly)* There the sword spoke.  
And yet the wise one said, "Take not  
your enemies together but separately,  
lest the meal go to them instead of to  
you." One at a time! *(To Chancellor)*  
Why am I not friend of Russia till  
France is out of the way, or France's  
friend until the Bear is muzzled? That  
was your part.

CHANCELLOR

For that I strove, but their mean  
minds suspected me. Sire, your sig-  
nature?

EMPEROR

What of Britain?

## DER TAG

---

EMPEROR

*(Intently)* This. THE DAY to which  
we have so often drunk draws  
near.

EMPEROR

The Day ! To the Day !

*(All salute The Day with their  
swords)*

But when ?

OFFICER

Now if she wants it.

EMPEROR

There is no road to Britain—until  
our neighbours are subdued. Then,

## DER TAG

---

for us, there will be no roads that do not lead to Britain.

CHANCELLOR

*(Suavely)* Your Imperial Majesty, Britain will not join in just now.

EMPEROR

If I was sure of that?

CHANCELLOR

I vouch for it. So well we've chosen our time it finds her at issue with herself, her wild women let loose, her colonies ready to turn against her, Ireland aflame, her paltry British army sulking with the civic powers.

# DER TAG

---

## EMPEROR

These wounds might heal suddenly if German bugles sounded. It is a land that in the past has done things.

## OFFICER

In the past, your Imperial Majesty ; but in the past alone lies Britain's greatness.

## EMPEROR

Yes, that's the German truth. Britain has grown dull and sluggish : a belly of a land, she lies overfed, no dreams within her such as keep Powers alive ; and timid too—without red blood in her, but in its stead a thick yellowish

## DER TAG

---

fluid. The most she'll play for is her own safety ; pretend to grant her that, and she'll seek her soft bed again. Britain's part in the world's making is done : "I was," her epitaph.

### CHANCELLOR

How well you know her, sire. All she needs is some small excuse for saying : "I acted in the best interests of my money bags." That excuse I've found for her. I have promised in your name a secret compact with her that if she stands aloof, the parts of France we do not at present need we will not at present take.



## DER TAG

---

### EMPEROR

A secret bargain over the head of France, her friend! Surely an infamous proposal.

### CHANCELLOR

The British Government will not think so. Trust me to know them, sire. Your signature?

### EMPEROR

(*Gleaming*) I can fling a million men within the week across the border by way of Alsace and Lorraine.

### OFFICER

(*Frowning*) There are a hundred gates to open that way.

## DER TAG

---

EMPEROR

My guns shall open them.

OFFICER

*(With meaning)* You can think of no easier road, sire?

EMPEROR

I think of it night and day.

OFFICER

One farther north—through Belgium.

EMPEROR

If I could dare! But no, that road is barred.

## DER TAG

---

OFFICER

*(Misunderstanding)* On the contrary,  
sire——

EMPEROR

Barred by a fortress no gun of mine  
may bear against—by honour, by our  
plighted word.

OFFICER

Yes, sire——

EMPEROR

*(After hesitating)* No, no, I will not  
so stain my name.

CHANCELLOR

I am with you, sire, but I fear it will

## DER TAG

---

not be so with France. She has grown cynical. She will find the road through Belgium.

### EMPEROR

You seek to tempt me. She also signed the treaty.

### CHANCELLOR

Your Imperial Majesty judges others by yourself. I have private ground for fearing that in the greed for a first advantage, France will call the treaty but a scrap of paper.

### EMPEROR

I think your private ground may be your own private newspaper.

## DER TAG

---

CHANCELLOR

She will say that necessity knows no law, or some such dastard words.

EMPEROR

Belgium is no craven : she will fight the betrayer.

CHANCELLOR

France will hack her way through.

EMPEROR

My Chancellor, that is a hideous phrase.

CHANCELLOR

I ask your pardon, sire. It came, somehow, pat to my lips.

## DER TAG

---

OFFICER

Your Imperial Majesty, the time passes—will it please you to sign?

CHANCELLOR

Buonaparte would have acted quickly.

EMPEROR

Buonaparte!

CHANCELLOR

The paper, sire.

EMPEROR

Leave it now with me. Return in an hour, and you shall have it signed.

## DER TAG

---

OFFICER

*(Warningly)* The least delay——

CHANCELLOR

Over-much reflection——

EMPEROR

I wish to be alone.

*(They retire respectfully, but anxious.  
He is left alone in thought.)*

EMPEROR

Even a King's life is but a day, and  
in his day the sun is at its zenith once.  
This is my zenith. Others will come  
to Germany, but not to me. The

## DER TAG

---

world pivots on me to-night. They said Buonaparte! coupling me with him. To dim Napoleon! Paris in three weeks—say four to cover any chance miscalculation. Russia on her back in six, with Poland snapping at her; and then after a breathing space we reach—The Day! We sweep the English Channel, changing its name as we embark, and cross by way of Calais, which will have fallen easily into our hands. The British Fleet destroyed—for that is part of the plan,—Dover to London is a week of leisured marching, and London itself, unfortified and panic-stricken, falls in a day. Væ Victis! I'll leave conquered Britain



## DER TAG

---

some balls to play with, so that there be no uprising. Next I carve America in great mouthfuls for my colonists, for now I stride the seas. It's all so docketed I feel it's as good as done before I set forth to do it. Dictator of the World! And all for pacific ends, for once the whole is mine we come at last to the great desideratum, a universal peace. Rulers over all! God in the heavens, I upon the earth—we two! (*Raising his eyes threateningly*) And there are still the Zeppelins! I'll sign.

*(The Spirit of Culture appears—a noble female figure in white robes.)*

## DER TAG

---

Who's that ?

CULTURE

A friend. I am Culture, who has so long hovered, well pleased, over happy Germany.

EMPEROR

*(Who gives her royal honour)* A friend, indeed—a consort. I would hear you say, O Queen, that I have done some things for you.

CULTURE

You have done much for me. I have held my head higher since you were added to the roll of Sovereigns.

## DER TAG

---

I may have smiled at you at times, as when you seemed to think that you were the two of us in one ; but, as Kings go, you have been a worthy King.

### EMPEROR

It was all done for you.

### CULTURE

So for long I thought. I looked upon Germany's golden granaries, plucked from ground once barren, its busy mills and furnaces, its outstretching commerce and teeming peoples and noble seats of learning, all mellowing in the sun ; and I heard you say they were dedicated to me, and I was

## DER TAG

---

proud. You have honoured me, my Emperor; and now I am here to be abased by you. All the sweet garments you have robed me in—tear them off me, and send me naked out of Germany.

EMPEROR

You would not have me sign?

CULTURE

I warn you first to know yourself, you who have gloated in a looking-glass too long.

EMPEROR

I sign that Germany may be greater

## DER TAG

---

still. To spread your banner farther:  
thus I make the whole world cul-  
tured.

### CULTURE

My banner needs no such spreading.  
It has ever been your weakness to  
think that I have no other home save  
here in Germany. I have many  
homes, and the fairest is in France.

### EMPEROR

If that were true, Germany would  
care less for you.

### CULTURE

If that is true, I have never had a

## DER TAG

---

home in Germany. I am no single nation's servant, no single race's queen. I am not of German make. My banner is in every land on which you would place your heel. I'll not have you say it is for me you fight. Find some other reason.

### EMPEROR

The jealousies of nations——

### CULTURE

All are guilty there. Jealousy, not love of money, is the root of all evil. That was a misprint. Yet I know of nothing those others want that is yours to give, save Peace. What do you

## DER TAG

---

want of them? Bites out of each, and when they refuse to be dismembered you cry "The blood be on their head, they force me into war."

### EMPEROR

Germany must expand. That is her divine mission. I have it from on high.

### CULTURE

Your system of espionage is known to be tolerably complete.

### EMPEROR

All Germany is with me. I hold in leash the mightiest machine for war the world has forged.

## DER TAG

---

### CULTURE

I have seen your legions, and all are with you. Never was a lord more trusted. O Emperor, does not that make you pause?

### EMPEROR

France invades little Belgium.

### CULTURE

Chivalrous France! Never. Emperor, I leave you. One last word to you at the parting of the ways. France, Russia, Britain, these are great opponents, but it is not they will bring the pillars of Germany down. Beware of Belgium!



## DER TAG

---

*(She goes. He is left in two minds; he crosses to sign, flings down pen, strikes bell. Chancellor and Officer re-appear.)*

CHANCELLOR

Your Imperial Majesty has signed?

EMPEROR

Thus! *(He tears the paper.)*

OFFICER

Sire!

EMPEROR

Say this to Russia, France and Britain in my Imperial name: So long

## **DER TAG**

---

as they keep within their borders, I remain in mine.

**OFFICER**

But, sire——

**EMPEROR**

You know as I do, that is all they ask for.

**CHANCELLOR**

You were the friend of Austria!

**EMPEROR**

I'll prove it. Tell her from me that Serbia has yielded on every point which doth become a nation, and that Austria may accept her terms.

## DER TAG

---

CHANCELLOR

Nay, sire——

EMPEROR

And so there will be no war.

OFFICER

Sire, we beg——

EMPEROR

These are my commands.

*(They have to go, chagrined but deferential.)*

EMPEROR

The decision lay with me, and I said

## DER TAG

---

"There shall be peace": that be my zenith!

*(He goes back to the chair. He sleeps peacefully. In the distance a bell tolls the Angelus, and suddenly this is broken by one boom of a great gun, which reverberates and should be startling. The Spirit of Culture returns, now with a wound in her breast. She surveys him sadly.)*

### CULTURE

Sleep on, unhappy King. *(He grows restless)* Nay, better to wake, if even your dreams appal you.

## DER TAG

---

*(He wakes, and for a moment he scarcely understands that he has been dreaming. The realisation is tragic to him.)*

EMPEROR

You! You have come here to mock me.

CULTURE

Oh, no.

EMPEROR

I dreamt there was no war. In my dream they came to me and I forbade the war. I saw the Fatherland smiling and prosperous, as it was before the war.

## DER TAG

---

CULTURE

It was you who made the war, O  
Emperor.

EMPEROR

Belgium?

CULTURE

There is no Belgium now. But over  
what was Belgium there rests a soft  
light as of a halo, and through it is a  
flaming sword.

EMPEROR

I dreamt I had kept my plighted  
word to Belgium.

## DER TAG

---

### CULTURE

It was you, O Emperor, who broke your plighted word and laid waste the land. In your lust for victory you violated even the Laws of War which men contrive so that when the sword is sheathed they may dare again face their Maker. Your way to Him is lighted now by smouldering spires and ashes that were once fair academic groves of mine. And you shall seek Him over roads cobbled with the moans of innocents.

### EMPEROR

In my dream I thought England was grown degenerate and would not fight.

## DER TAG

---

### CULTURE

She fought you where Crecy was  
and Agincourt and Waterloo, with all  
their dead to help her. The dead be-  
came quick in their ancient graves,  
stirred by the tread of the island feet,  
and they cried out, "How is England  
doing?" The living answered the dead  
upon their bugles with the "All's  
well." England, O Emperor, was  
grown degenerate, but you have made  
her great again.

### EMPEROR

France, Russia?

### CULTURE

They are here, around your walls.



## DER TAG

---

EMPEROR

My people ?

CULTURE

I see none marching, but men whose feet make no sound. Shades of your soldiers, who pass on and on in never-ending lines.

EMPEROR

Do they curse me ?

CULTURE

None. They all salute you as they pass. They have done your bidding.

## DER TAG

---

EMPEROR

The women curse me?

CULTURE

Not even the women. They, too, salute you. You were their father and could do no wrong.

EMPEROR

And you?

CULTURE

I have come with this gaping wound in my breast, to bid you farewell.

EMPEROR

God cannot let my Germany be utterly destroyed.

# DER TAG

---

## CULTURE

If God is with the Allies, Germany  
will not be destroyed. Farewell!

*(She is going ; she lifts a pistol  
from the table and puts it in his  
hand. She goes with shining eyes.  
The penny dip burns low. The great  
Emperor is lost in its shadows.)*

END

---

Printed 1915 in Great Britain, at the Edinburgh Press.  
68 Old Bailey, London, E.C.

FOR OTHER WORKS  
BY J. M. BARRIE SEE  
FOLLOWING PAGES

## The KIRRIEMUIR EDITION of the WORKS OF J. M. BARRIE

---

- Vol. 1. AULD LIGHT IDYLLS.  
Vol. 2. BETTER DEAD.  
AN EDINBURGH ELEVEN.  
Vol. 3. A WINDOW IN THRUMS.  
MARGARET OGILVY.  
Vol. 4. WHEN A MAN'S SINGLE.  
Vol. 5. MY LADY NICOTINE.  
Vol. 6. THE LITTLE MINISTER.  
Vol. 7. SENTIMENTAL TOMMY.  
Vol. 8. TOMMY AND GRIZEL.  
Vol. 8. THE LITTLE WHITE BIRD.  
Vol. 10. PETER AND WENDY.

The production throughout of "THE KIRRIEMUIR EDITION OF THE WORKS OF J. M. BARRIE" is on the most sumptuous scale. All Sir J. M. Barrie's books have been re-set for this edition by Messrs. T. & A. CONSTABLE, of Edinburgh, and printed by them in royal octavo on deckle-edged paper. The Kirriemuir Edition is complete in ten volumes, price £6 6s. net each set, and is strictly limited to one thousand sets. The volumes are not sold separately.

HODDER & STOUGHTON, PUBLISHERS, WARWICK SQ., LONDON, E.C.

J. M. BARRIE

## The ADMIRABLE CRICHTON

By J. M. BARRIE

Illustrated in Colour by HUGH THOMSON.

Uniform with *Quality Street*.

Limited Edition de Luxe, £2 2s. net.

Cloth, 15s. net.

*The Admirable Crichton* is perhaps the most popular of all Sir J. M. Barrie's plays. The first act, it will be remembered, takes place in a London drawing-room; the second on a desert island, and no more delightful desert island scenes have ever been pictured. For the lover of beautifully illustrated colour books this book will take a foremost place, as did *Quality Street* last year. Mr. Hugh Thomson is again the illustrator. *The Admirable Crichton* has never before been issued in book form. It has been very carefully revised by the author, and quite apart from the dialogue, the descriptions of the scenery and introductions to the acts are full of inimitable touches.

HODDER & STOUGHTON, PUBLISHERS, WARWICK SQ., LONDON, E.C.

J. M. BARRIE

## QUALITY STREET

By J. M. BARRIE

With Thirty Plates in Colour and many Line  
Illustrations by HUGH THOMSON.

Limited Edition de Luxe, £2 2s. net.  
Cloth, 15s. net.

"If we wanted to make a present to a book-lover of refined taste our choice would fall on *Quality Street*."—STANDARD.

"The beautiful coloured illustrations are the best work we remember to have seen by this accomplished artist."—TIMES.

"For a good many years now Mr. Thomson's exquisite art has helped to give our most dearly loved volumes a touch of grace. . . . And with the same sympathy, the same fine and delicate intuition, he has here presented to us the quaint old world that had its habitation on *Quality Street*."—OUTLOOK.

"Everybody can now make themselves quite satisfied—everybody who can either buy this delightful book or get it given to them."—EVENING STANDARD.

"To have one's comedy brought back to the stage, added to the library, and hung in the gallery, all within a dozen days, is to have it revived indeed."—DAILY CHRONICLE.

HODDER & STOUGHTON, PUBLISHERS, WARWICK SQ., LONDON, E.C.

J. M. BARRIE

The most famous Gift Book of modern times,  
written by J. M. BARRIE and Illustrated in  
Colour by ARTHUR RACKHAM.

# PETER PAN IN KENSINGTON GARDENS

By J. M. BARRIE

Illustrated with Plates in Colour by  
ARTHUR RACKHAM.

Bound in Vellum, 30s. net. Cloth, 15s. net.

Also with Twelve Plates, boxed:

Velvet Calf, 10s. 6d. net. Cloth, 6s. net.

"We find it difficult," says THE WORLD, "to keep within the bounds of artistic restraint. Mr. Barrie has done what no one has done since the inventor of *Alice*, he has invented a new legend, a modern folk-story which comprehends all the innermost secrets of the modern, be he four or forty. Mr. Rackham, for his part, has been bewitched in his cradle; he does not dream of fairies or hobgoblins, he knows them."

HODDER & STOUGHTON, PUBLISHERS, WARWICK SQ., LONDON, E.C.



J. M. BARRIE

## PETER AND WENDY

By J. M. BARRIE

With new Frontispiece in Colour and  
Illustrations by F. D. BEDFORD.

Boxed, 6s. net.

"It is certainly not too much to say that no book within memory will have aroused wider interest throughout Great and Greater Britain than this continuation of the Peter Pan Legend."—DAILY MAIL.

"The play is, one ecstasy and the story is another. I am tempted to say that the story is the finer ecstasy. The play got at you in all sorts of delicious ways, but the story gets at you in other even more delicious ways; and the beauty of the story is that you can chuckle and sob over it in secret."—THE STAR (*James Douglas*).

"A book that will take its stand beside *Alice in Wonderland*."—COUNTRY LIFE.

"Now at last children can have the whole story read to them, nothing left out, nothing 'told wrong.' Mothers and fathers, and uncles and aunts, will bless Mr. Barrie's name."—DAILY MAIL.

HODDER & STOUGHTON, PUBLISHERS, WARWICK SQ., LONDON, E.C.

Other Works by J. M. BARRIE

A WINDOW IN THRUMS  
AULD LIGHT IDYLLS  
WHEN A MAN'S SINGLE  
MY LADY NICOTINE  
MARGARET OGILVY  
THE LITTLE WHITE BIRD



HODDER & STOUGHTON, PUBLISHERS, WARWICK SQ., LONDON, E.C.